

# COBBETT'S WEEKLY REGISTER.

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## THE FARMER'S WIFE'S FRIEND;

*Or, the way for the Farmer's Wife to assist in saving her family from ruin; showing how it is that the taxes and the present rents and tithes produce the present distress; and showing also what sort of life the farmer's family is to lead, according to publications put forth under the name of the Duke of Buckingham.*

ADDRESSED TO  
ENGLISH FARMERS' WIVES.

Kensington, 20 March, 1822.

FARMERS' WIVES,

IT is now just about a year, since I made an earnest appeal to you in order to induce you to stir up your husbands to stand forth for a *Reform of the Parliament*, as the only means of saving them, you, and your children from beggary. The progress of things since that time has shown that that

appeal was founded in reason and in a pretty accurate knowledge of what was going to happen; for, where is now the *renting* farmer, who does not expect to be totally ruined, unless something effectual be speedily done to save him?

The reasons why a *Reform of the Parliament* is the only means of salvation I shall explain to you clearly before I have done. My first business is to convince you, to make you see clearly, that it is the *taxes*, the *present rents* and *tithes*, which produce the *present distress*, which cause the embarrassment of your husbands, and which threaten to make you and your children paupers. I shall, before I have done, show you that the far greater part of these taxes are wholly unnecessary to any good purpose. The three things, which I undertake to prove to you, are,—1. That it is the taxes, and the present rents and tithes, which cause the distress;—2. That rents and tithes ought to be altered;—3. That a *Reform of the Parlia-*

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ment is the only means of getting the taxes effectually reduced, and of getting things to be on a fair footing. If I prove these things clearly to you, I shall hardly need to have to urge you to endeavour to stimulate your husbands to stand forward like *men* in the cause of *Parliamentary Reform*. But, at any rate, I shall, in the course of this Letter convince you, that you ought immediately to resolve to put some few *pieces of gold* in a state of safety; that you ought to save some little matter from the wreck; and not suffer the last shilling to go to the *landlord* and the *parson*. I beseech you to listen to what I say upon *this part* of my subject particularly; for, when the landlords' and parsons' "*ladies*" have got your last shilling to spend upon their fine dresses and fine carriages, and when you and your daughters are come to rags, it will be too late for you to listen to advice from anybody. I implore you to think of this *in time*; and, if you slight my warning, remember, that you will be the makers of your own misery and the misery of your children. You have already seen a great change, but you have a much greater to see: you have already fallen very low, but you have a great deal lower to fall, unless

you immediately follow my advice.

Not to trouble you with further preface, I shall now proceed to the three points before mentioned; and, if I trespass longer on your time than I could wish, recollect that I can *gain* nothing by saving you from utter ruin, that whether you become paupers or not, it is all the same to me; and that, therefore, it is impossible, that, in the writing of this address to you, I can have any other object in view than *your good*.

1. *That it is the taxes and the present rent and tithes that cause the present distress.*—You will have observed, that the King's Ministers and a majority of the House of Commons *deny this*, particularly as relating to the *taxes*. One of the arguments that they make use of is this: that the taxes were *greater in amount* during the war; that the farmers were then *prosperous*; and, that, therefore, it *cannot be* the taxes that produce the distress. This is a specious, a deceiving falsehood; and, if those who make use of it be deceived themselves, all that that does for them, is, to show that they are *ignorant men*; and you will, before I have done, be convinced, that high rank and pro-

found ignorance are not always inseparable.

It is very true that a *larger sum* was collected in taxes during the war; and, it is also true, that farmers were then *prosperous*. But, pray remark, that *wheat* then sold for about *fifteen shillings* a bushel, and that it now sells for less than *five shillings*. During the war there was the *property-tax* and the *war-malt-tax*. These were taken off. Half this malt-tax was put on again in 1819, and it is now to be taken off again. However, upon the whole, about a *fourth* part of the taxes paid during war have been taken off since the war; but (and I pray you to mark this) the Ministers and the parliament have, since the war, adopted measures and passed acts, that have made the wheat sell at five shillings a bushel instead of fifteen. So that, while they have taken *three shillings and ninepence* off from every fifteen shillings of the taxes, their measures and acts have taken *ten shillings* from every fifteen in the price of wheat. Therefore, though the taxes be less in *name*, less in mere *show*, than they were before, they are, in reality, greater than they were before, and indeed, nearly *three times as great* as they were during

the war. Thus it is that your husbands find themselves ruined without knowing why. They know well enough, that it is the *low price* that keeps them from receiving the money that they want to pay their way; but, their heads have been puzzled to know what it is that *causes the low price*. They see, indeed, that there is *less money* about than there used to be. They know that the Country Banks have not half so much out as they used to have. The measures and acts of the government have caused this *want of money*; this want of money makes the *low prices*; and these low prices cause the *distress*, because the taxes, which used to be paid by high prices, have now to be paid by low prices; or, in other words, because your husbands have to pay, all but one-fourth, as much taxes out of *five shillings* as they used to pay out of *fifteen shillings*.

Some of you, like me, are old enough to remember, the *peace* that took place after the *old American war*. You know, that farmers greatly flourished as soon as *that peace* came. You know that *that peace* brought us all *prosperity*. And, our fathers told us, that *peace* always brought *plenty* and *happiness*. How comes it

then, *this peace* brings swift decay, ruin, and misery to the farmer ; to him, who, of all others, ought to be benefited by peace ? The reason of this strange difference between the effects of *this peace*, and of every *former peace*, is this : the taxes have now, as I have before shown, been made nearly three times as great as they were before *this peace* took place ; the rents and tithes, as I shall show, have been augmented in the same proportion. This has been done by measures and acts of the Ministers and the Parliament ; and, observe, *this never was done at any former peace* ; and, I may add, that such a thing was never before done, or thought of, by any government in the world. This is the reason why the return of peace has seen such misery now, instead of that happiness which used to be formerly witnessed by the return of peace. There is one of the Ministers, whose name is Castlereagh ; who tells us, that the distress has been caused by a *sudden* change from war to peace. Are not such changes *always* sudden ? And, how is it, then, that this distress has been growing *greater* and *greater* for *eight years* ? This is not very sudden ! There is another Minister that tells us, that the distress of the farmer

arises from low price occasioned by *too abundant crops*. But, you know well, that the *last* harvest was *not so abundant* as the harvest before, and yet, as you well know, prices have *fallen since last harvest*. Now, then, these Ministers must be very *insincere*, or very *foolish* men. One or the other they *must* be ; and, be they which they may, you ought to put no trust in their opinions and sayings. There is a very wild person, whose name is WEBB HALL, who says the low prices and the distress arise from the importation of *foreign corn* ; but this must be impossible, because no corn has been imported for *three years*, and yet the prices have been getting *lower and lower* from that time to this.

Oh, no ! Farmers' Wives have too much sense ; too much sense and reason, if king's Ministers have not, to believe that those are the causes of that horrible ruin that now stares them in the face. You must see clearly, that the real cause of the ruin is to be found, only in your husbands' being compelled to pay as much taxes out of five shillings as they formerly paid out of fifteen shillings. In most cases they have been, hitherto, compelled to pay *rent* and *tithes* in the same mon-



strous proportion ; but, the *taxes* are first to be considered ; and, it is now my business to show you what taxes you do pay, and how you are ruined in *this way*, and not by *peace*, not by *too abundant crops*, not by *foreign corn*.

The Ministers assert, that taxes do not cause the distress to the farmer, because, as they say, he *pays so little in taxes*. And there is a *Duke*, under whose name a list of the taxes, paid by the farmer of 400 acres of land, has been published in all the news-

papers. This Duke is the Duke of Buckingham ; the man who was made a Duke the other day, and of whom and whose family I will say more by-and-by. This Duke said, in the House of Lords, that the taxes paid by a farm of 400 acres were a mere *trifle* ; and, in a few days after he made this speech, the following list was published in the newspapers, as coming from him and as making good his assertion, which list I insert just as I find it in those papers.

THE following are the calculations which were referred to by the Duke of Buckingham in the House of Lords, on the 26th February, to prove how small is the Effect of Taxation, direct and indirect, paid by the Farmer and his Labourers, on the Price of Wheat.

#### No. I.

Estimate of Taxation paid by a Farmer renting 400 Acres—Himself, his Wife, one Woman Servant, and three Men Servants in Family.

Articles.	Quantity consumed.	Total Cost.	Rate of Duty.	Total Tax.
		<i>l. s. d.</i>		<i>l. s. d.</i>
Malt.....	15 Quarters	30 0 0	New Rate.	
Hops .....	60 lb. ....	3 0 0	2s. 1½d. per bushel.	12 15 0
Salt .....	5 cwt. ....	8 10 0	2d. per lb.	0 10 0
Leather for shoes.	12 lb. ....	2 4 0	30s. per cwt.	7 10 0
Ditto for harness..	30 lb. ....	.....	3d. per lb.	0 3 0
Tea .....	10 lb. 7s.	3 10 0	3d. per lb.	0 7 6
Sugar .....	52 lb. 6d.	1 6 0	100 per cent.	1 15 0
Soap.....	72 lb. 8d.	2 8 0	100 per cent.	0 13 0
Candles .....	72 lb. 7½d.	2 5 0	3½d. per lb.	0 19 6
Brandy.....	1 Gallon ..	1 5 0	1d. per lb.	0 6 0
Rum.....	1 ditto....	1 0 0	12s. 7½d. per gallon.	0 12 7½
Gin .....	4 ditto....	2 4 0	10s. 4½d. per ditto.	0 10 4½
Wearing apparel ..	.....	.....	1s. 4½d. per ditto.	0 10 6
Riding Horse ....	... 1 ....	.....	.....	1 0 0
Groom .....	... 1 ....	.....	.....	2 17 6
Windows.....	... 9 ....	.....	.....	0 10 0
				2 2 0
Farmer's Taxes				33 2 0

## No. II.

Estimate of Taxation on the Labourers required to cultivate a Farm of 400 Acres, half Grass, half Arable.

Number of Labourers.	Articles.	Quantity consumed.	Total Cost.	Rate of Duty.	Total Tax.
			£. s. d.		£. s. d.
3 in the house 1 married, with wife & child.	Leather	24 lb. 6 pr. shoes	3 12 0	3d. per lb. ..	0 6 0
	Leather	10 lb. 4 pair ..	1 18 0	3d. per lb. ..	0 2 6
	Candles	20 lb. ... 7½d. ..	0 12 6	1d. per lb. ..	0 1 8
	Salt ...	52 lb. ... 3½d. ..	0 16 3	3½d. per lb. ..	0 14 1
	Soap ...	13 lb. ... 8d. ....	0 8 8	3½d. per lb. ..	0 3 6½
	Tea ...	5½ lb. ... 7s. ....	1 18 6	100 per cent.	0 19 3
	Sugar ..	13 lb. ... 6d. ....	0 6 6	100 per cent.	0 3 3
	Ale ....	1½ pint per day home-brewed .....	.....	½d. per pint	1 2 9½
2 Labourers Single men..	Leather	16 lb. 4 pr. shoes	2 8 0	3d. per lb. ..	0 4 0
	Salt ...	26 lb. at 3½d. ...	0 8 1½	3½d. per lb. ...	0 7 0½
	Soap ..	13 lb. at 8d. ..	0 8 8	3½d. per lb. ..	0 3 6½
	Ale ....	365 quarts .....	.....	1d. per quart	1 10 5
2 Boys .....	Leather	12 lb. 4 pair ..	1 10 0	3d. per lb. ..	0 3 0
	Soap ...	6½ lb. at 8d. ..	0 4 4	3½d. per lb. ...	0 1 9
	Salt ...	6½ lb. at 3½d. ...	0 2 0	3½d. per lb. ..	0 1 9
Total Tax on Labourers .....					6 4 6½
Add the amount of No. I. ....					33 2 0
Total Taxes paid by the Farmer .....					39 6 6½

Before I enter into particulars, let me point out the monstrosity of the idea, that, in the house of a farm of 400 acres, there is to be only *one* maid servant, and that there are to be *no children*; and also the idea, not less monstrous, that there is to be but *one married labourer* to such a farm, and that even he is to have but *one child*. Pray observe, that this Duke has here *nine* men and boys, and only *three* of the female sex. So that, according to his account, there must be three men to one woman throughout the country;

for, it is impossible to give any reason to show, why the females should abound in any class *more* than in that of husbandry. The grossness of the *ignorance*, or something else, that we behold here, would make us cast aside this List as rubbish, unworthy of our attention; and this is what I should do at once, but the List is a thing that ought to be *recorded*; it presents us with a *Bill of Fare* which a Duke has provided for the farming people; and, as such, it is worthy of being preserved.

A mere glance at this Bill of

Fare will, doubtless, let you into the light as to what is *intended for you*. What do you think, my dear Abigails, of a pound, a *whole pound* of *sixpenny sugar* for only *one week* in the house of a farm of 400 acres; and of *three ounces* and  $\frac{3}{4}$  or one fourteenth part of another ounce of bohea tea for a week for the same house? What do you think of almost *a pound and a half* of *candles* and the *like weight* of *soap* for a week for such a farm-house? No *starch*, of course; for, the devil of any frills or caps are you to have and the devil of any shirts your husbands. What think you of 12 *pounds* of rough leather, or about six when made up, in the *year* for you, your husband and maid, in shoes, boots, gloves, breeches, and all other things in which leather is used? But, why need I say any thing more, in this way, than just to congratulate you on the *comfortable dish of tea* that you and your husband and the maid will have out of two ounces and better of nice red sugar and almost half an ounce of black tea, in a day! Ah! silly Yeomanry Cavalry! Could the *Radicals* have brought you *lower* down than this? Would they have allowed your wives *no caps* and you only one pair of

shoes in a year, and no boots? Would they have allowed you neither pepper, vinegar, tobacco, paper, books, tables, chairs, coals, physic, nor coffins? Would they have allowed you to have *no children*? Would they ever have thought of bringing you and your wives down to the Buckingham Bill of Fare, which is a vast deal *lower*, a vast deal meaner and more degrading than that of the Negro-slaves either in Virginia or Jamaica: they are allowed to *breed*, at any rate!

Seeing that this is the Bill of Fare, which a *Duke* has allotted to the farmers and their wives, it may not be amiss for us to see *who* and *what* this Duke is, and what sort of Bill of Fare *he and his family* have out of the produce of these same taxes of which I am speaking. This Duke's name is *Grenville*, and there is a large family of these Grenvilles. This one was made a Duke but the other day; and, therefore, we must suppose, that those who advised the king to make him a Duke, discovered some great merit in him; and, we must also suppose, that his sentiments, as to the life that you ought to lead, are the sentiments of the king's ministers. But as to the Bill of Fare of these Grenvilles: this Duke's father

received, out of the taxes, for a great number of years, a very large sum of money every year, and that, too, for a *sinecure*-office; that is to say, an office where there was *nothing for him to do*. So that this Duke had, in all likelihood, more than a pound of six-penny sugar a week *to himself* even when he was a boy. The whole family must have fared pretty well; for this is the statement respecting them, made by Mr. BENNET, in the House of Commons, only a fortnight ago. "He would read a short statement of their allowances in pensions and salaries of *sinecure*-offices. In the year 1795 Lord Grenville became an Auditor of the Exchequer, at the regulated salary of 4,000*l.* per annum, so that he received during the whole of the period for which he held the office (twenty-one years) 85,000*l.* of the public money. Mr. Thomas Grenville was presented with the *sinecure* of Chief Justice of Eyre, with a yearly salary of 2,000*l.*; and he took altogether no less than 44,000*l.* In 1763 the late Marquis of Buckingham was appointed first teller of the Exchequer. He enjoyed this office for the space of fifty-six years, and, taking the average salary

"at 10,000*l.* a-year, which he (Mr. Bennet) thought was rather below the mark, his Lordship must have derived from the public purse during that period, the enormous total of 560,000*l.* Another branch of this family, in 1762 was presented with a *sinecure* appointment of not less than 3,000*l.* a-year; and up to the present moment, consequently, he had taken 180,000*l.* altogether. He had spoken in round numbers; but by the paper which he held in his hand, it appeared that from the earliest of the periods he had named, up to the present year, the Grenville family had shared between them no less a sum than 872,000*l.*"

This was pretty well; but, the sum is greatly understated; and Mr. Bennet forgot one of the family; a Mr. WYNN, a first cousin of this Duke, who at a very early age, was sent to be an ambassador at Dresden, where he remained *four years*, when he came home; and, from that day to the other day, when he was sent out to some other place, he received out of the taxes, 1,200*l.* a-year *pension*; so that, for four years' service, he got the four years' salary about 12,000*l.* and in pension he got 15,000*l.*



Lord Grenville and a Mr. Thomas Grenville, who are uncles of this Duke, have now, the former 4,000*l.* and the latter 2,000*l.* a-year, in *sinecure offices*; and, in a Report laid before the House of Commons, in 1808, it appears that Lady Grenville, the wife, of the former, had a *pension* settled on her of 1,500*l.* a-year, to commence at her lord's death! So that, you see, the females of this Duke's family must want *rather more than a pound* of sixpenny sugar and *three ounces* of bohea tea a-week! However, if your husbands like all this; if they like to pay taxes for these and such-like purposes; if they would *rather* that you should be capless and smockless and shoeless; if they would *rather* that this should be, and that the Grenvilles should have all this money out of the taxes; if they would *rather* that things should go on thus than help to get a *reform of parliament*, why, all that I can say is, that it is much more their and your affair than it is mine; and, with all my heart I wish you joy of your beggary and of your *Buchingham Bill of Fare*!

But, upon the supposition, and, indeed, in the hope, that you do not relish this Bill of Fare, and that the "gallant Yeomanry" are

coming to their senses, I will now proceed to prove to you, that the taxes (with present rents and tithes) are the cause of the distress and ruin of your husbands.

The list of the Duke of Buckingham does not contain more than a *twentieth part* of the articles on which you pay taxes. Then it does not contain half the number of labouring people employed upon such a farm. Then it leaves out the taxes of smiths, collarmakers, wheelwrights and other tradesmen, a portion of which taxes the farmer must pay. And then (which I shall first notice) it shamefully and impudently understates the taxes paid by the farm-house family and the labourers, whom it supposes to exist on the farm.

The fifteen quarters of *Malt* might be enough for the six persons; but, in the first place, the tax on Malt is 2*s.* 6*d.* a bushel after the 1*s.* shall be taken off. Why, then, does this Duke call it 2*s.* 1½*d.*? But, this is not all; for the tax causes *expenses* beyond its bare amount. The trouble that the maltster has with the exciseman; the hindrance this fellow gives him; the advance of money to pay the tax; the capital required for this; the sort of *monopoly* that it gives; all these add

to the price of the malt. In short, the well-known fact is this: that a bushel of barley will make nearly a bushel *and a peck* of malt, and that this increase is more than sufficient to pay *for malting*. So that, *all* that is not cost of barley *is tax*; and, as malt, with the 1s. duty taken off, is 7s. a bushel, and as barley is 2s. 6d. a bushel, the farmer pays 4s. 6d. a bushel in tax. This is the true view of the matter; and therefore, the tax on the fifteen quarters is 27l. instead of the Duke's 12l. 15s. But, is nobody to drink beer from the farm-house but these six persons? Are the *haymakers* and *harvest people* to have none? If they do not, the beer must be *paid for in money*, which is the same thing in the end; so that tax on malt must be, on such a farmer, about 60l. or 70l. a-year instead of 12l.

Of *Salt* the Duke allows ten bushels, which may be enough for the six persons. And the tax he states at 15s. a bushel. But, as in the case of the malt, he omits the *expenses* which the tax occasions. You give 19s. a bushel, when, if there were no tax, you would give at most 1s. 6d. For (and now *mark* this), when salt is sent to *America*, the tax is taken off; and, when it arrives there, the grocers

sell it out there by retail at 2s. 6d. a bushel! So that, if we allow 1s. 6d. for lading, unlading, freight, wharfage, insurance, tonnage-duty, and for merchant and grocer's profit, the salt costs at first but 1s. It is notorious that it costs *less*; but, allowing 1s. 6d. then you pay 17s. 6d. tax. So that here would be 3l. 15s. instead of 7l. 10s. And *only* think of this monstrous thing; that this very same quantity of this very same salt, the American farmer, who lives across the Atlantic Ocean, can get at 2s. 6d. a bushel, while you are compelled to pay 19s. a bushel for it! When I lived at Botley, within a few miles of a *saltern*, I paid 19s. a bushel for my salt, and, the very same year, I paid, in America, 2s. 6d. a bushel for the salt brought across the sea from this very saltern! Well enough American or any foreign farmers may *undersell* your husbands! On malt the American farmer pays no tax at all. Things are somewhat the same in all countries but this; and this is the reason why foreign farmers are able to *undersell* you. But, then, those countries are not so happy as to possess *Grenville families*!

How came the *Duke* to think that a half pound of hops was enough for a bushel of malt? Let

us put down one hundred and twenty pounds of hops, if it please your Grace; and let us charge the *expenses* of the hop-tax, and we shall find the hop-tax 30s. instead of 10s.

But only think of twelve pounds of *Leather* in a year for the farmer, his wife and maid! Shoes, boots, gloves, breeches, gaiters, and all other things, only twelve pounds weight; and that, too, mind, in the *whole hide or skin*, one half of which, as to weight is cut away in the working up. So that here is only two pounds of leather each for this farmer, his wife and maid. If we allow about forty-eight instead of twelve, and that is only about twenty-four pounds in the weight of the articles when made, and allow, as in the case of Malt and Salt, for the *expences* of the tax, we shall find this tax amount to 18s. for these three persons instead of 3s.

Now comes the Leather for "*harness*," and the Duke allows for a farm of 400 acres, requiring *two teams*, thirty pounds of Leather a-year; that is to say, for the wagon-harness of *eight* horses, the plough-harness, the straps on the wagon and cart shafts, the horse-collars, the collar-laces, the thongs, the whips, the bridle, the saddle, and a hundred other

things. Upon such a farm half a *horse hide* is wanted to cut up into thongs and straps and laces, in the course of the year. The bare repair of horse-collars will require a dozen pounds in a year. I have forgotten the ox-collars where oxen are tied up to fat; and also halters for horses. *Two hundred* pounds of Leather of all sorts is not enough; and if the *expense* of the tax be added, here are 70s. a-year tax instead of 7s. 6d.

Next comes the *tea* and the *sugar*; but of these I have said enough for the present, though I shall touch on them by-and-by; just observing here, that the *expences* of the tax are to be added here, as well as in every other case. And now for the *soap* and *candles*. Here are seventy-two pounds of each allowed for the year; that is to say, *one pound* and six ounces a week. What *cleanly* people you will be; and what a deal of *light* you will have! This is to be a *dairy farm* too, in great part. And what clean clothes, and tables and dressers you will have! And how nice you will look about your butter! As to caps and smocks there are to be none allowed by the Buckingham Bill of Fare. In short, as to *soap*, look at you who *likes*,

and touch or smell you who *dare!* You well know that this allowance of candles (a dip-candle and a half a day) is hardly enough for the *stables* during six months of the year. That you are to have no candle to do needlework by, much less to *chat* by, is evident enough; but, even with all these restrictions you will require twice the quantity allowed you in this Bill of Fare; and, observe that, in the case of *soap* and *candles*, even more strikingly than in the case of *Malt* and *Salt*; the tax is injurious to the farmer, because *you and your maids can make these*, and from the farm go the principal of the *materials* to make them of. In America, where there is *no such thing as an Exciseman*, the farmers make their own soap and candles. I bought both at a neighbouring farm-house, till I killed some sheep and an ox myself; and then my maids made better candles than I have ever seen in England, and as good soap as I wish to have. In *soft soap* there is little to buy. In the hard soap not much, if the tax be taken from the ashes and alkali; and as to the candles, take the tax from the *cotton*, which is very heavy, and you can make your candles for 3d. a pound. Your hard soap you can

make for 2d, and soft soap for 1d. So, my Lord Duke, we will, if you please, allow some caps and smocks and shirts, and allow a little light to work by and to go to bed by, at any rate, and to feed and curry the horses by, and these will demand, even on your establishment of persons, two hundred pounds of soap and as many of candles; and, as these now cost, according even to *your* account, 12l. 18s. and as they could be made in the farm-house for 3l. 15s. if the taxes on them were removed *clean away*, here is 3l. 3s. tax on soap and candles, for the *farm-house* alone.

We now come to the *Brandy, Rum, and Gin*, the tax on which I count as *nothing*; because I hold them to be *pernicious*, and that the farmer, or any other man, who is in the habit of using them, is a *criminal*; and that, if any woman be in that habit, she is a *loathsome beast*, and ought never to be honoured with the appellation of *mother, wife, or daughter*. The heavier the tax on these pernicious and brutalising things the better; and, is it not scandalous to see a tax of only 1s. 4½d. on *nine or ten shilling's worth of gin*, while there is a tax of 15s. on *one shilling's*



*worth of salt!* Is this the way to promote sobriety and "*morality?*" Lord Castlereagh, the other day, said, that he preferred the use of tea to *beer*, by the people, on the score of *morality*; why, then, not tax the *gin*, as much, at least, as he does *salt*, which is an absolute necessary of life? Why not tax it as much as he does the *soap*? And, pray, observe how *generous* our new Duke is as to spirits. He will allow Rum, and even French Brandy, though he will not allow you starch, pepper, vinegar, paper, books, tables or chairs, coals, or physic or coffins; and though he will allow you *no children!* He will allow your house nearly *as much for spirits* as for *sugar and tea*; he will allow you as much, within a shilling, for French Brandy alone as for *all the sugar used in a farmhouse?* He will allow more half pints of spirits than he allows pounds of sugar, and nearly as many half pints as he will allow pounds of soap or of candles! He will allow as much to be spent, all but 4s, in spirits as in soap and candles, and more than twice as much as he will allow to be spent in shoes, boots, gloves, breeches, gaiters, and all other articles used in the family, made of leather! There's a *generous*

Grenville! There's a noble soul! There's a new Duke, and a great statesman to judge of the means of making a people happy!

But the Duke is so good as to allow something for *wearing apparel*. He does not state the *amount* of the clothes here, but merely the amount of the *tax*, and he generously gives a *pound* on the whole for the farmer, his wife and maid. He allows of no *laces*, no *tapes*, but, let him know that of every yard of cheap *calico* *two-thirds and more* are tax and expenses of tax. Tax on the raw cotton, tax on all the colours, tax on all the materials that the machines and manufactory are made of, tax on all the manufacturers consume, and tax in every shape, till the thing is on the back, besides a *direct tax* of one-fourth of the present price of cheap printed calico. Nearly the same may be said of all woollens, and linens of all sorts; and though the stamp tax is taken off the hat, it comes to be loaded with the tax on the fur, tax on the oil, tax on the dye, tax on the bristles that make the brushes used in making the hat, and on those that make the brush that brushes the hat while in wear; unless indeed, which is most probable, his *grace* does not

I think it necessary that the farmer should have his hat brushed at all; for, to see a brushed hat or any hat upon the head of a wretch who is to be the daily participator, morning and evening, in *one ounce of brown sugar*, which he is to share with two others; for such a convict-fed wretch to pretend to have a *brushed hat* would be to show a mutinous spirit, a spirit of insubordination, and might bring down on his rebellious head a charge of "*sedition and blasphemy!*" But, to dismiss this rubbish; this impudent statement of a *pound* a year tax on the wearing apparel of the farmer, his wife and maid, consider all the above taxes, and the taxes on the draper and the tailor, of which the consumer must pay a share, and you will find, that more than *two thirds* of every article of wearing apparel is tax; and, if the clothes cost those three persons *12l.* only a year, eight of them are tax.

Thus have I gone through the List of No. I. As to the *second*, or No. II, reserving for a moment what I have to say of the *number* of labourers, only think of the *one* married man with *one* child! Only think of these three persons being allowed a little more than *half an ounce of brown sugar a*

*day*, and one and a half pint of beer a day! Only think of the two single men to be allowed (harvest time included) a pint of beer a day each, and *no tea* or *sugar*, and *no candlelight!* And only think of the *tax* on their beer being *1d.* a pot, when Mr. Calvert says that *he* pays the government *1½d.* besides what the publican pays, which is not less than *three farthings more*, besides the tax on the brewer's horses and harness and on his tubs and every thing else! And only think of the "*two Boys*," who, mind, are not to be in the farm-house, and who, be they where they may, are to be allowed neither *tea*, nor *sugar*, nor *beer* of any sort or kind! His *grace* does, in the overflowing of his *generosity*, allow those two boys *6½* pounds of *soap* in a year; and a brace of pretty dirty devils they must be; for, to wash a smock frock, a shirt and a pair of stockings a week, for each, will take 20 pounds of soap in the year for the two; and still leave their *flesh* as black as that of negroes, so that, to make this a brace of *real slaves*, they will not be deficient even in colour of skin.

So much for the *Buckingham Bill of Fare*, put forth in the face of a nation that used to boast of its *good cheer*; that used to

sing "Oh, the roast-beef of Old England," and that used to laugh at the French for eating *frogs* and *sallad*! And now let us see what articles the noble Grenville has wholly omitted.

*Tobacco* and *snuff* he allows none to his *seven men* and three women. If these seven be to have none, nobody else can have any: *slap* goes, then, *two millions and a half of revenue*, unless the Grenvilles and others of the "*high orders*" be to use all the tobacco! And this would be his Grace's way of supporting "*public faith*" and preventing "*national bankruptcy*." As to *raisins* and *currants* and *spices* of all sorts, his grace allows none of them in a farm-house; neither does he allow of *starch*, *pepper* or *vinegar*; and away, of course, goes *another million of revenue*. His grace will not allow the farmer of four hundred acres of land to have any thing to pay for *stamp-duty*, no lawsuits, no deeds, no buying any thing of a licenced person, no wills, no legacies, no notes of hand, receipts, news-papers, almanacks, fire insurance, medicines (for horses or wife), no gold or silver plate, no pamphlets, advertisements, no riding in coaches, hack or stage; and, as the farmer of

400 acres is to touch none of these, *who is to do it?* So his grace, in order to "*support public credit*," sweeps away nearly *seven millions more of revenue*. His grace suffers the farmer of 400 acres neither to sell nor buy *at auction*; nor to use any *paper*; nor to have any *books* (not even a Bible); nor to receive any *letters*; nor use any *coals*; or *bricks*, or *stones*, or *slate*, or *hemp* (either in *ropes*, *cords*, *string*, *halters*, or *sacks*), or any *Swedish iron*; and, as to *wine*, it is an abomination in a farm-house, especially where there are to be no *christenings* and *groanings*, and where they are to keep Christmas and Harvest-home with two *whole ounces and more of red sugar* a day! But, then his grace must mean to lop off another *three or four millions of revenue*, in order to preserve the "*national faith*!" In short (and this is the right view of the matter) there are no taxes, of which the farmer of 400 acres does not *participate* in the payment. Now then, this Grenville Duke of ours will let him partake in those only which yield about *eighteen millions a-year* of clear revenue; and, as the whole of the taxes do now yield a revenue of *fifty-four millions*, his grace must mean to cut off *thirty-six millions*, which

is precisely what *I want to see done*; but which would be an odd way of supporting what his *grace* is pleased, in condescending imitation of the monotonous harbinger of summer, to call "supporting of *national faith*."

Let us now see a little about the *number of persons* that his *grace* allows to this farm of 400 acres. He *will* have it *half grass land*. Will he cut the grass for hay? Let him add at least *thirty women* for a month. Will he *graze it*? This will want shepherds and drovers and boys. But, in *half* the cases at least, it must be *dairy*. Let him put three more maids into the house and two more men. And even, then, he has not more than *half* men and boys enough for the arable land, including the harvest. And, as to the monstrous idea, that there is to be only *one* married labourer out of *six*, and that that one is to have but *one child*, do you not treat it with scorn and contempt inexpressible!

His *grace*, who does not appear to have the faculty of seeing far beyond his nose, seems not to have been able even to get a glimpse at one *large branch* of the taxes paid by the farmer; namely, the taxes of the Smiths,

Collarmakers, Wheelwrights, Shoemakers, Tailors, and all other tradespeople that he employs, or with whom he deals, in any way whatever. I shall have no difficulty here, because his *grace* has, in his lists, admitted the principle; for, if the farmer pay the whole of the taxes of his ploughman, who does not live in his house, he must pay the whole of the taxes of a *smith* who works for nobody but him. This is evident; and, *how many* farms of 400 acres are a smith, his man and a boy able to do the work of? Not more than *four*. Here are pretty nearly forty horses to shoe, besides all the work to be done to wagons, carts, ploughs, harrows, prongs, shovels, gates, and God knows what besides. One *collarmaker* may do for eight such farms; a *wheelwright* for six; but, if you add the shoemaker, the tailor, the carpenter, and the bricklayer, you will find that the farmer of 400 acres has to pay out of the produce of his crop, taxes, direct and indirect, for about fifteen persons (including children) in the *tradesman branch* of the labour performed on his farm, and which labour is as necessary to him as is the labour of the ploughman himself.

I marvel that his *Grace* over-



looked this; his *grace* who is so profound a *statesman*, and, withal, so liberal in his allowances! In short, on every thing that the farmer wants for his use there is a *tax*, and, besides this, he has to pay a share of the taxes of the persons who supply his wants. Well, then, his *grace* will exclaim, and do not the eaters of bread and meat *pay the farmer all his taxes back again*? Yes, if he can get a *price high enough* to make them pay him again; but, if he cannot; if the parliament, by its acts, make the money in the country so small in quantity, that he cannot get a price high enough to enable him to pay himself for what he lays out, those who eat the meat and bread do not pay him back what he has paid in taxes; and he sinks his capital, and becomes a *ruined man*. And this is the course in which your husbands are now proceeding. If so much were not taken away in taxes, there would be more left for other purposes; but, if the produce be so heavily loaded with taxes, that the farmer has not enough out of the produce to pay rent with, the rent must go unpaid; or, it must come out of the farmer's capital. Suppose, for instance, that I rent a hundred acres at a hundred a-year

and am doing very well; keeping up my stock, and saving 40 pounds a-year. Suppose the government to lay taxes on my necessities of life and implements, things that I cannot do without, to the amount of 140 pounds a-year. What is the consequence? Why, that I cannot save any thing, and that I can pay no rent, unless I sell off part of my stock, to pay the rent with. The next year I must sell more of my stock to pay rent with. And, thus, the landlord gets my capital, and I am ruined. Well, but *why do I not put a price on my produce* sufficient to enable me to pay my rent and to save as before? So I would; but, the general amount of prices in any country *depends on the quantity of money circulating in that country* compared with the number and amount of money transactions; and, if the quantity of money be the same after my taxes be laid on as it was before, *my prices cannot rise with my taxes*. During the last war, the taxes rose from thirteen to more than sixty millions a-year and still the farmers grew rich; but, then, observe, the *money increased even faster than the taxes*, and the *prices rose in proportion*. But now, the *same taxes* (all but a *fourth*) remain; and the quantity of money is brought back to

*nearly what it was before the taxes were augmented.* This is the reason why your husbands cannot get *high price to pay them back the taxes*; and therefore it is that they cannot pay *rents*, except out of their capitals.

This brings me to the other causes of the farmers' ruin, the *present rent and tithes*. The *taxes alone* would, in time, leave the farmer little; they would make him a low and poor man; but, when there are *rent and tithes*, in addition to the taxes, the candle is lighted at both ends; and especially where the rent and tithes were agreed on at a time when *prices were higher* than they are now. Precisely *what sum* goes away in the year, in taxes, from a farmer of 400 acres, it is, as we have seen, quite impossible to tell. Such a farmer shares in all the taxes; and, therefore, the plainest view to take of this matter is this. Before the last war (in the year 1790) prices of *farm-produce* were, and had been for years, much about what they are now. Then the whole of the taxes in Great Britain amounted to less than *thirteen millions a-year*; and they now amount to more than *fifty-three millions a-year*. So that it must be madness, down-

right insanity, in any one not to see at once, that every farm of 400 acres must now pay more than four times as much in taxes as it paid then; and, if farmers, upon the same rents and tithes that they paid then; if with four times as much tax, can pay the rents and tithes of 1790, what a fine time of it must they have had in 1790, and what generous people the landlords and parsons of those days must have been! But, the case is a great deal worse than this, for the farmer now pays (until he *breaks*) much *greater rents and tithes* than he paid in 1790, besides paying *more than four times* the taxes that he paid in 1790. He, therefore, unless he give way, unless he get out of the scrape some way or other, must be completely ruined; for all his capital, all his stock, must go to the taxing tribe, the landlord and the parson.

I shall be told, and so you are told, I dare say, in the "*religious tracts*" that the parsons circulate about, that a *tenth* is a *tenth* now as well as in 1790. But, I beg you to hear me upon this subject. Get half an ounce more of candle from his *Grace*, just to read, three times over, this one paragraph. A *tenth* is certainly a *tenth* now as well as in

1790; but a tenth that your husbands pay four times as much taxes to get as they paid to get a tenth in 1790, makes the tenth now a very different thing from the tenth then!—Now snuff the little bit of candle.—If I have a ten-acre field of wheat, on which I have expended *no tax*, and another, in all other respects like, on which I have expended *ten pounds in tax*, does not the parson take away a *pound more* from the latter field than from the former? Yes, as clear as daylight.—And now let his Grace's bit of candle expire in the socket; for, you must not be that sensible woman that most farmers' wives are, if any parson can now persuade you, that the tenth of 1822 is the same thing as the tenth of 1790; or, if he can make you believe, that he does not now, in addition to a tenth of the *crop*, get from your husband an amount equal to that of a *tenth part of all the taxes that the farm pays*. Get the Rector or Vicar of your parish, if he should happen to live any where in your part of the country, to come and see you, and to partake of a comfortable Buckingham dish of tea; read this to him (without telling him *who wrote it*), and just watch him a bit, and hear what he says! If he look

as if nothing were the matter of him; if he talk coolly; if he *reason*; listen to him with all due attention; but, if he change colour; if his lips quiver, and if he begin to rail against the writer, and to accuse him of "*sedition and blasphemy*," get rid of him as soon as you can, and make up your mind, that he is wrong and that I am right.

3. Now, then, it being manifest that ruin must finally fall on every farmer, however rich he may be, that has present taxes, rents and tithes to pay out of the prices of 1790, it is equally manifest, that the present *rents* ought to be *reduced to those of 1790*, and that *three-fourths of the present taxes ought to be taken off*. You will say, that your husbands have not the *power* to cause taxes to be taken off. I know that very well. And I also know, that many of them are bound by lease to pay, not only rents as high as those of 1790, but a great deal higher. How to get them out of these bonds, I know not; but, where they are *not bound*, they can, surely, get out of giving up your last gown to go to deck out the waiting gentlewomen of the landlords' and parsons' wives! For mind, this is what they are

now doing. Every penny (except in a few peculiar instances) that the landlord and parson get from the farmer, comes, not out of the gains, not out of the increase, not out of the produce, of the farm, but out of the *capital*, or *stock*, of the farmer, who is, and who must be, every day becoming a poorer and poorer man; while the landlord and the parson, if one get his rent and the other his tithe, are gaining, as they long have been gaining, by the farmers' loss.

If, therefore, no alteration be made in the rent and tithe, it is madness for any man to remain in a farm. I know how unwilling farmers are to quit, I know how many thousands have remained till they became paupers; and I know what pains base and wicked and covetous and fraudulent men have taken to persuade them that "*things will come round again.*" Alas! things will never come round again! Things can never come round again! And, every thing that I have seen, and that I yet see, convinces me, that the course of events will be this: that the main body of the farmers, actuated by the fear of being out of business on the one hand, and buoyed up by false hopes on the other hand, will continue to pay

rents as long as they have a shilling left; that they will drop off into the pauper-list one by one; that their places will be supplied by a species of bailiffs; that rents will cease, by degrees, all over the country; that the landlords will become of little account; and that, at no very distant day, the land being unable to pay taxes and tithes too, these latter will be "*dealt with according to law,*" as so many of the Radical Reformers have been; and that, at last, *if no unexpected event occur*, the taxgatherers, under some name or other, will appoint the bailiffs to the farms.

I may be deceived as to these forebodings, and I wish I may; but (and I beg you to remark and remember it) those who bid the farmers to have *hope*, bid them to hope that their *prices will rise*. This (and let your husbands note it well) is the *only* ground of hope, that these silly, or knavish, men have to rest on. They have no hope but this; and they talk of no hope but this. And, such being the case, what a shame is it, that there should be one single farmer in all England so weak, so childish, so miserably foolish as to believe them; and so scandalously unmindful of his duty to his wife and family as to keep any



farm (that he can, by any means, get rid of) at *any rent at all!* How can prices rise, when there is a law in existence that must make the circulating money *less in quantity than it now is?* Have not your husbands seen a bad crop and a wet harvest, and have they not seen their prices *continue to fall?* What will convince them then? What will open their eyes?

In 1814, just after the peace, I said, that it was impossible to pay the present taxes unless the prices were high. Mr. Huskisson, now one of the King's Ministers, said the same. He said, that, even if the landlords were to *give up all their rents*, fifty or sixty millions of taxes could not be paid without prices *twice as great* as they were in the year 1790. This gentleman, has *now* changed his tone; but he is *now* a Minister, and was *not* one in 1814! Truth does not change, however; and it is unquestionably true, that the present taxes cannot be paid by present prices, even if *all rents* be given up. That is to say, even though the landlords give up all rents and become paupers themselves, still the farmers cannot go on with the present taxes without sinking into beggary. They must have the tithes taken off as well as the rents; and,

even then, though they will sink more *slowly*, they must become mere bailiffs to the taxgatherers.

Yet, this Mr. HUSKISSON is one of those, who would persuade the half-ruined farmers that *things will mend*; that things will *come round*; that prices will rise; when it is as impossible as it is to make yesterday return. All the time, however, that the farmers can be made to believe this, they are hastening on to utter ruin. In some cases they are led along by *reduction of rent and tithe*. Those who reduce, doubtless, in some cases, *mean well*; but, they are deceived themselves as much as the farmers are. They are not necessarily wise men, because they own land. They think, that it is *impossible* that things should not come round; but, they can give you no *reason* for this. Let me hope, that no farmer who reads this will be encouraged to proceed with a farm by having *a part* of his rent taken off. Take off the *whole*, and then the whole of the tithe, and he may get along for a little while; at least, he will be able to quit when he likes; and, in the meanwhile, let me beseech you to lay by *some few pieces of gold against a rainy day*; for, there is no one can tell what may happen.

But, you will ask, is there no means of giving *relief*. Yes, *taking off the taxes*, or a great part of them; not a shilling a bushel on malt, but a large part of the whole of the taxes. This would leave the farmer money to pay fair rent with, and would make his tithe much less than it is now, as I have clearly shown you above. And, if you ask why the taxes are not taken off, you bring me to my third point, namely, that, to obtain this there must be a *reform of the House of Commons*.

III. Lord Castlereagh said, the other day, that a *reform of parliament* would not raise the price of corn a farthing a bushel. And, who ever said it would? and who but very foolish or very wicked men ever *wished* the price of corn to be raised? But, all good men, all men who do not wish to see the farmers and tradesmen utterly ruined and the labourers starved or made paupers of, wish to see the *taxes reduced*. That is the thing that a reformed Parliament is wanted for, and that is the first thing that a reformed Parliament would do, and do *effectually* and *instantly*. This, and this alone, can save farmers that cling to their farms; but, unless the farmers throughout the country *manfully*

*come forward and ask for this reform*, unless the *yeomanry* do this, reform will never be obtained in the manner that all good men could wish it to be obtained.

We all know that some taxes are necessary to the support of government, and that without government, there can be no peace or safety in society; but, do you think, that we want a *more expensive* army and navy now, in time of profound peace, than we wanted *during the last peace*? What must you think, then, when you are told, that the army and navy costs more than *four times* as much now as it did during the last peace? But, what must you think when you are told, that a navy of twenty thousand seamen and marines costs nearly *three times* as much as a navy of the *same numbers* cost in the last peace?

Here are the things that ruin the farmers; here are the things that call for a reform of parliament, it being the opinion of every man of sense, that these things never will be altered, unless there be a House of Commons chosen by the people at large. I have before mentioned the immense sums received by the family of Grenville. Now, do you think, that, if the people at large had the choosing of those who manage

the money concerns of the nation, that that family would ever have received all that money! I suppose that a farm of 400 acres pays, at least 500*l.* a-year in taxes of all sorts and in all manner of ways. So that the two uncles of this Duke of Buckingham now receive out of the taxes a sum equal to the taxes paid by fourteen 400 acre farms, on which farms about 460 people (old and young) depend in some way or other. They take as much for *doing nothing* as would support 233 labourers' families at 30 pounds a-year each family! Is this what the farmers can like? And yet it was against, and is against, these things that the Radicals complained and still complain, and that they did want, and do want, to put an end to. Can you see any good reason, why Mr. WYNN, the cousin of this Duke of Buckingham, should have received 1,200*l.* a-year for doing nothing from 1807 to 1822, merely because he had been receiving a large salary for four years before that time? And, will any one pretend to say, that the taxes were *necessary* that went to pay this man these large sums of money? As I am speaking of this Ambassador, I will speak of the whole. We had, in 1808 (I can find no

account of later date) 24 Ministers at Foreign Courts; and we had 45 such Ministers *in pay* besides these; so that we had in all, 69 Ambassadors and other Ministers. The whole 45 received in the year 1808, 57,589*l.*, though performing no service at all; and some of them had been paid in this way for upwards of 40 years! A Mr. DUTENS, who had been a charge d'affaires at Turin for 13 months, from June 1761 to July 1762, had, in 1808, been receiving a pension of 300*l.* a-year during the whole of the time; that is to say, during forty-six years; that is to say, 11,800*l.* for thirteen months' as charge d'affaires!

When we think of these things, is it any wonder that farmers are impoverished, and that the labourers become paupers? That which is taken away to keep these people and their troops of servants, cannot be kept for the feeding and clothing of you, your husbands and children, and to help keep the labourers from becoming paupers. There was a Mr. GEORGE CANNING that you may have heard of, who was sent as an Ambassador to Portugal (where there was no king or queen or sovereign) with a salary of 14,000*l.* a-year; or enough to

support 466 labourers' families at 30*l.* a family. To enumerate all the instances of public money, or taxes, bestowed in this sort of way, and in pensions and sinecures, would fill twenty such pamphlets as this. The very tax that you would have to pay on the pamphlets would cost more than a month's tea and sugar on the scale of the Buckingham Bill of Fare. But, I cannot help mentioning Mr. William Huskisson, abovenamed, who, in 1801, obtained a pension for life of 1,200*l.* a-year, always to be paid him, *except* when he should hold an office of 2,000*l.* a-year. This affectionate husband took care of *his wife* too, Mrs. Emily Huskisson, who had a pension of 600*l.* a-year settled on her, to commence at her husband's death. It has pleased God to spare this loving husband to enjoy a fat place, and to tell the farmers that they want nothing but *bad crops* to *relieve* them! Mrs. Emily Huskisson would, I suppose, not much relish a dish of tea according to the Buckingham Bill of Fare! And, yet, it would be hard to show, that she has a better right to a good dish of tea than you have. You have already thought, perhaps, that the Grenvilles have taken care to provide for a good

dish of tea; but, in an account laid before parliament in 1808, (since which time there has *been none*) the *wife* of Lord Grenville, one of the uncles of our Duke, stands with a pension of 1,500*l.* a-year settled on her, to commence at her husband's death, and to continue for her life. But in this account (which is hardly grown less bulky) there are *hundreds of ladies*, young and old, and some *little girls*, pensioned out of the taxes that we pay. But, perhaps, the most striking thing of all is, that, for many years past, for 12 years at least, 100,000*l.* a-year has been voted by our parliament out of our taxes, to assist the "*poor Clergy*" of the Church of England! So that this enormously rich Church, several scores of the Clergy of which are rolling in wealth, must, besides all the tithes and glebe, have these immense sums given it out of the taxes, in order to relieve its "*poor Clergy*!"

And here let me observe, that our Duke of Buckingham, when he mentioned his Bill of Fare, observed, that "he was persuaded "that one of the most effectual "modes of *relieving the farmer* "would be the adoption of some "measure which should restore



"the poor to their ancient condition of earning their own bread, instead of living on the country as annuitants." Now, what a slap in the face is here to all the above fine persons, who certainly do "*live on the country!*" Oh! my lord Duke, I'll tell you the measures to adopt, and the first is, to take off all the pensions, sinecures and grants, which now take away as much as would, if not raised in taxes, put, in great part, an end to the pauperism. He says nothing about giving such immense sums to relieve the parsons' wives and children, but the wives and children of the labourers; these are called *annuitants, living on the country!* What are all the *ladies*, old, young, and little girls, on the pension-list? Are not they annuitants, "*living on the country?*" And *who* is "*the country?*" Those who *work* to raise the food and raiment, or those who eat and wear them in idleness?

It is the taxes, and (wherever they exist) exorbitant rents and tithes that make paupers. The farmer, pressed by the taxgatherer (and by the landlord and the parson if rent and tithes be too high,) has not a sufficiency to give in *wages*. The labourer, for this reason, is compelled to become a

pauper or to starve, and no man will die of starvation, if he can get at food. The taxes, therefore, which take so much away from the farmer, and out of the wages of labour itself, make the paupers; and this we see clearly proved in the fact, that, now the taxes are four times as great as they were in 1790, the poor-rates are also four times as great. When a farmer now breaks (as thousands do) is he not made a *poor man* by the taxes? And, when he becomes a pauper, is it *his fault*, or the fault of those who have imposed such ruinous taxation? To blame the labourers is horribly unjust. Take off the taxes, and they will no longer be paupers, any more than their great grandfathers were. To *them* no part of the blame belongs. They did not lay on the misery-making taxes; nor have they had any power to cause them to be taken off. Some of them have attempted to effect this; and their reward has been dreadful abuse and more dreadful punishment. Your husbands *have had some power*; but, that power they have used to keep taxes on, and not to take them off. When the labourer receives *nine* shillings, *four* at the least are for the taxgatherer; for nothing can he wear or swallow

that is not taxed, unless he dress in fig-leaves, eat dirt, and drink water. It is *five shillings*, therefore, and not *nine*, that he receives; and yet he is now told, that he ought to *earn his bread*, and not be an "annuitant living on the country!" He lives on nobody; but enough *live on him*. His toil keeps enough of others in idleness; and, surely, he is to have as much food as will barely keep him alive! Long enough, and too long, have we heard farmers inveighing *against the poor*. Everlasting out-ery against the poor-rates; but none against the taxes that cause the poor-rates. Bitter invectives, loud reproaches, on the defenceless and broken-hearted labourers, without whom farmers are nothing; but, nothing but civility towards the taxgatherers and tax-eaters of all descriptions.

Upon every principle hitherto known amongst men, "the labourer is worthy of his hire," that is to say, according to the evident meaning of our Saviour, worthy of an ample sufficiency of food and raiment. The law of nature tells us, that, of the food and raiment raised from the land or caught in the chase, the *first portion* belongs to the husbandman and the hunter. Moses' law,

that is the law of God, forbids to muzzle the ox while he is treading out the corn, a command which shows how careful we ought to be to be just, considerate, kind, humane, and even grateful towards all those who perform the *toils* of the community. Base is the man who can be happy, who can enjoy himself, while he has reason to suspect that he owes any part of his enjoyments to the unrequited toil of another; and, what must those be, who can wallow in wealth and luxury, procured them by the labour of others; who can see those others perishing with hunger and nakedness, and condescend even to notice them only for the purpose of covering them with insult!

The middle class of society have a wrong and blind bias whenever they lean to the higher rather than the lower. The lower are their natural allies. Without these they are nothing. If the labourer be degraded into a slave, the farmer's turn comes next. And, if the labourers of England had not become miserable paupers, and been nick-named the "*peasantry, the population*;" if their bill of fare had not long been *potatoes and water*, we never should have seen *two ounces of red sugar* set down as the daily

treat of the farmer of four hundred acres and his wife. But (and *mark* it well) if two *labouring boys* are to have neither tea, sugar, nor beer of any kind, from one year's end to the other, then *two ounces of red sugar* is too great a luxury for the farmer and his wife! Let this sink deeply into your minds. The thought of seeing you brought into this state of degradation has entered one man's mind, at any rate; and the thought has, too, been *openly*, and even ostentatiously, avowed.

This never would have been the case; such a thought as this never would have entered the mind of any man in former times, before English labourers were bowed down to the earth, as they have been within the last thirty years especially. In this work of degradation the farmers have had their part; and, the consequences are before us: an innumerable host of pampered and insolent tax-eaters; and a "*yeomanry*," each of whose families is to be regaled with two ounces of sixpenny sugar a day! While the farmers were efficient for all the purposes of taxation and of rent and tithe paying too; while the high prices and the depreciated money enabled them to wring from the labourer a sufficiency to

satisfy the demands of taxation without practising much of frugality themselves; Oh! then they were the "*yeomanry*," the "*enlightened yeomanry*," the "*sound part of the country*;" but now, that the unsparing hand of taxation is grasping at their capital, and they begin to cry out in their turn; now one calls them "*populace*;" another appeals from them to "*the education of the country*," a third bids them "*put on smock frocks*," and a fourth allots to each family of "*enlightened yeomanry*" two ounces of sixpenny sugar a day! Let this be a warning to the farmers: let them see, before it be too late, that there is no safety, no chance of escape for them, but in conjunction with the mass of the people.

Nay, it is the same thing with regard to the greater part of landlords also and even of tithe-owners. Mr. WESTERN says, that the *Sheriff's officers* (much more efficient men in this way than Radicals) are going *round* to the farmers of Essex as *fast as they can*. The farmer's capital goes *first*; but it is only the precursor of the rent and the tithe. So that landlords and parsons, as well as farmers, have no hope but in the mass of the just and loyal people. How quickly would a reform take

place if any *considerable body* of landlords and yeomen came forward in the cause! How efficient would their remonstrances be, seconded, as they *every where would be*, by the undivided voice of the mass of the people! But, it is for them now to call on the people: the people have long enough, and much too long, called on them in vain. At any rate, if the landlord, from his false pride and true baseness suffer his last acre to be taken away, do *you* take care that your husbands' *last shilling* be not first taken away *by the landlord*.

To you, the farmers' wives, it belongs to do much. A man is coward indeed, who is insensible to the reproach of lack of spirit, coming from a female tongue. You should consider, that even the Buckingham Bill of Fare is luxury to what awaits you and your children in the poor-house. And at what stage short of the poor-house are you to rest, unless the hand of taxation relax its grasp? But, how much worse off than ordinary paupers will you and your family be? The recollection of past prosperity, though it were unembittered by any consciousness of cruelty or injustice towards the poor, would inflict on

you sufferings that are unknown to the common pauper, who, with mind habituated to degradation and without knowing what hope or emulation means, seeks only for what is requisite to satisfy the calls of hunger. Those, who, after a long career of prosperity, have had, in days of decline and misery, to experience the effect of blandishments and caresses exchanged for neglect and scorn; those, and those only, can anticipate the sufferings that await you and your children, unless you instantly resolve to do all that in you lies to *save something from the wreck* that awaits every farmer's family not already dashed to pieces.

Fling from you with disdain the vague hope, unsupported, as it is by reason or experience, that "those at the head of affairs *must know best*, and that, surely, they will not let you be reduced to "beggary." If they must know best, how come you in your present state? If they must know best, why have so many thousands of farmers' families already had the beds taken from under them? If they must know best, why is it that all their plans have failed, that all their expectations have been disappointed, that all their predictions have been falsified?



If they must know best, how is it that they, in one and the same breath, regret the existence of too much food and encourage projects for checking the increase of mouths? If they must know best, how is it that the calling of the farmer, heretofore steady as the sun that warms the earth and safe as the earth itself, has, under their sway, become more uncertain than the winds and more perilous than the rocks and billows? If they must know best, how is it, that they now confess, that they know not what to do, and that this greatest of all national concerns must be left to chance?

Away, then, with this blind reliance. Consider well your situation. Weigh carefully your dangers and your duties. Employ all your powerful influence. If the wreck must come, save, as you would save your lives, *some pieces of gold*; and, above all things, remember, at your down-laying and up-rising remember, the two ounces of six-penny sugar!

I am,

With sincere respect,

Your Friend and

most obedient Servant,

WM. COBBETT.

I SHALL have the above Letter, called "*The Farmer's Wife's Friend*," put into a *separate Pamphlet*, next Week, and shall sell it for *threepence*. I am persuaded, that, if it could be read in *every farm-house in England*; or, in only one-fourth part of them, the Country would be *saved* from all danger of that *dreadful catastrophe*, which seems to be now awaiting it! For, the conduct, on the part of the Farmers, which is here proved to be necessary to their *own safety*, to the saving of themselves from beggary, would produce an instant movement on the part of the Landlords; both would co-operate with the people at large; and saving measures would be adopted *in time*. This being my opinion, I am very anxious for the wide circulation of this Pamphlet. It will contain a great deal of print; but, we will send to any gentleman who wishes to see it circulated, *two hundred for a pound, four hundred and fifty for two pounds, and a thousand for four pounds*. — In the case of *Webb Hall* we circulated about *thirty thousand*; and that *settled* the gentleman, though a person of uncommon powers of face! What we have now in hand is of far more importance: it is to

*settle firmly* in the minds of Farmers, their wives, children, and tradesmen, the great and useful and efficient truth, **THAT TAXATION IS THE CAUSE OF THEIR DISTRESS AND RUIN.** This truth once fairly imprinted on their minds, the Country will be safe.—Let me, therefore, again call upon all those zealous and active and meritorious persons who so laudably and so successfully assisted me in the case of Webb Hall, to lend their aid in this more important case. The profit is very large, always more than *half the amount*. To send poor men, or women, or boys to *fairs and markets* and about the Country is the way.—The Pamphlet will be ready by *Friday next*, the 29th of March.

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TO

#### MONEY HOARDERS.

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THE Exchanges have fallen; the *Price of gold has risen*; the paper-money must instantly be made less in quantity; or *the gold must go out of the country*. Look sharp; get what gold you can,

and keep what you get. Remember, "Catch is a good dog; but *Holdfast* is a better." The gold must be off; or prices of all things must fall greatly. *Keep the gold*, and you will get an acre of *good land*, in a year's time, for about ten *sovereigns*; and of middling land for about six; unless Peel's Bill be repealed, and that will be all the same to you; for you will sell a sovereign for three or four pounds of the paper-money that will then be afloat.—Look sharp; get gold and *keep it*; for things are working at a great rate!

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#### CHEATS AND FORGERS.

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AT various times Cheats and Forgers have put forth things *under my name*, in order to cheat the public of their money. There are now two things put forth in this way, called "**COBBETT'S GRIDIRON**."—I beg my readers to beware of these cheats; for, to give them *money* is no charity, and is only to take from the industrious to feed these idle vagabonds, who ought to be sweeping the streets. Any stray dog that you meet is more worthy of a bit of bread.

### LATE BANKER COUTTS.

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THIS Funeral Oration is unavoidably put off till next week. I *do* a pretty deal; but I am always thinking I ought to do more than I can do. However, the present sheet is so full of matters, relating to the *living*, that the dead, though, in this case, well worthy of public attention, must wait for more room.

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### TURNIPS AND LUCERNE.

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I HAVE written some directions for the sowing of Swedish Turnip Seed to raise Plants for *transplanting*; and also some directions for the sowing and *transplanting* of *Lucerne*. But I have not room for them this week.

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### COBBETT'S SERMONS.

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THE Twelve Numbers are now out. They may be had separately; or in a complete collection, or in

a neat little *volume in boards*. The price of each of the first eleven is 3*d.* that of the twelfth 6*d.* (for that is a *thumper*), and that of the volume in boards is 4*s.* I have now circulated about a *hundred thousand* Sermons of my own writing in one year, and have hereby done more in the cause of *morality* and of *real religion*, than I believe to have been done by all the parsons in the Kingdom within the last hundred years. The *last* Sermon should be read by every man, woman and child in the country. It is a challenge to the whole body of the Clergy, and to all their friends, aiders and abettors.

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### COTTAGE ECONOMY.

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THE last Number of this Work, price 6*d.* will be published *next Saturday*. I have been compelled to make it a *Double Number*, in order to avoid leaving out many useful *little things*.—The Volume, in boards, will be 2*s.* 6*d.*